Afterschool Alliance
AFTERSCHOOL FOR ALL

AFTERSCHOOL STEM HUB

Every Student Succeeds Act: Opportunities to Support STEM

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Afterschool Alliance

Afterschool Alliance - Your Go-To Resource

Communications, Research, Policy + Capacity Building

- Policy Updates
- Research and Polling
- Communications Tools
- Program Resources

www.afterschoolalliance.org



Afterschool Alliance

America After 3PM

America After 3PM is the nation's most comprehensive look at how children spend their time during the hours after school and during the summer. Conducted roughly every five years, the 2025 study is the fifth edition of the survey. Previous studies were conducted in 2004, 2009, 2014, and 2020.

America After 3PM serves as a resource for policymakers, educators, parents, and advocates on demand for afterschool and summer programs, barriers to program participation, which students are missing out, and parents' views on afterschool and summer programs.

The America After 3PM special report, "The Summer Struggle for Everyday Families: Affording the Opportunities Parents Want for Youth," is based on research funded by The Wallace Foundation.

https://afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM/landing/

Afterschool STEM Hub

- **Build Public Support for Afterschool STEM**
- **Develop Resources for the Field**
- **Raise Awareness with Policymakers**



https://www.afterschoolstemhub.org

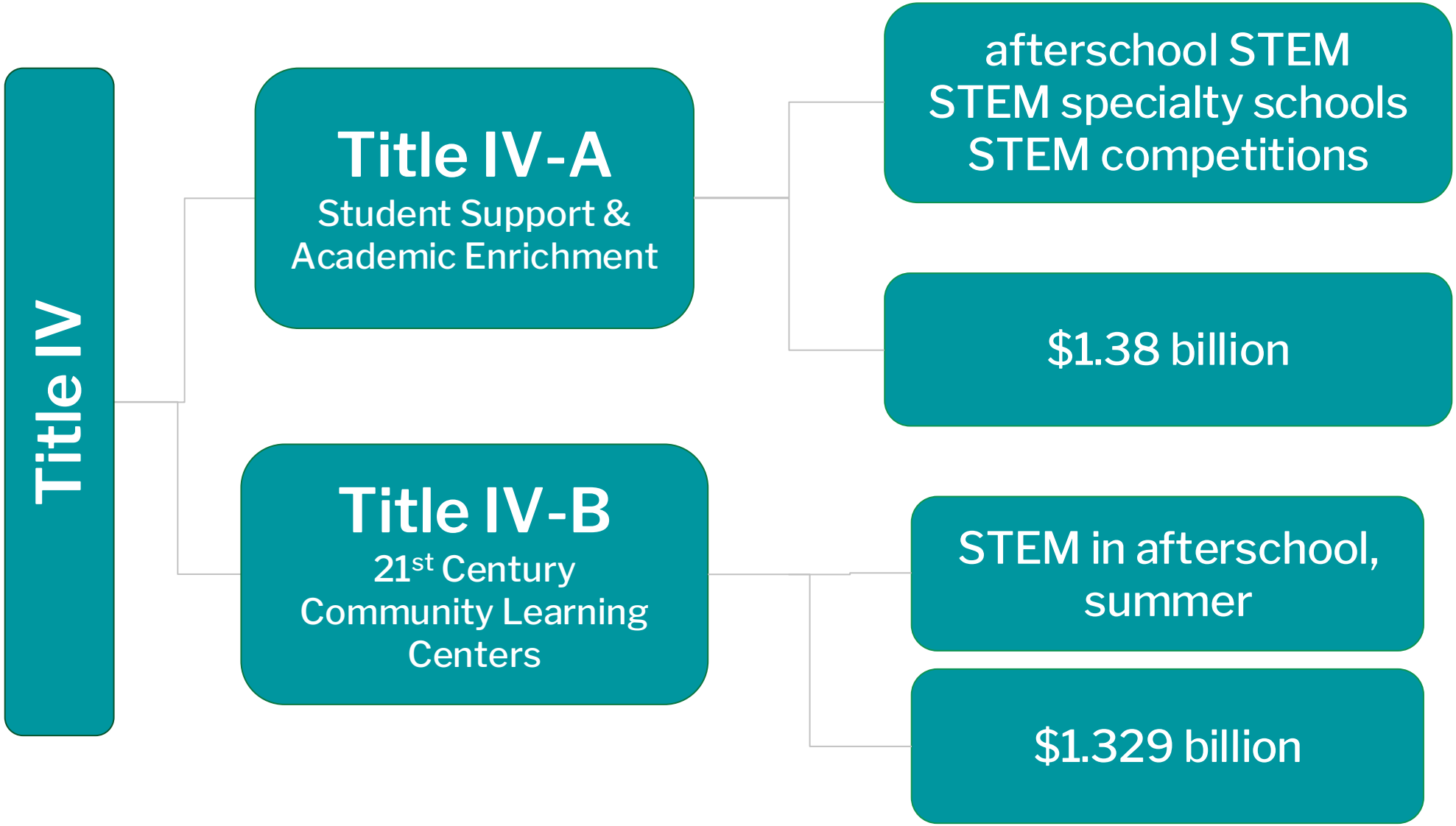
Elementary and Secondary Education Act

- Signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson in 1965
- Focused on low-income, underserved communities through different “titles”
- Last reauthorized in 2015 as the **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Programs

Title I	Title II	Title III	Title IV
Districts w/ high # low-income families	Teacher professional development	English language learners	21st Century Community Learning Centers + Student Support & Academic Enrichment

Funding within ESSA Supporting STEM



Title IV-A:
Student Support & Academic Enrichment

1

Providing students with a well-rounded education.

College and career counseling, STEM, including computer science, music and arts, civics, IB/AP

2

Supporting safe and healthy students.

Comprehensive school mental and behavioral health, drug and violence prevention, training on trauma-informed practices, health and physical education

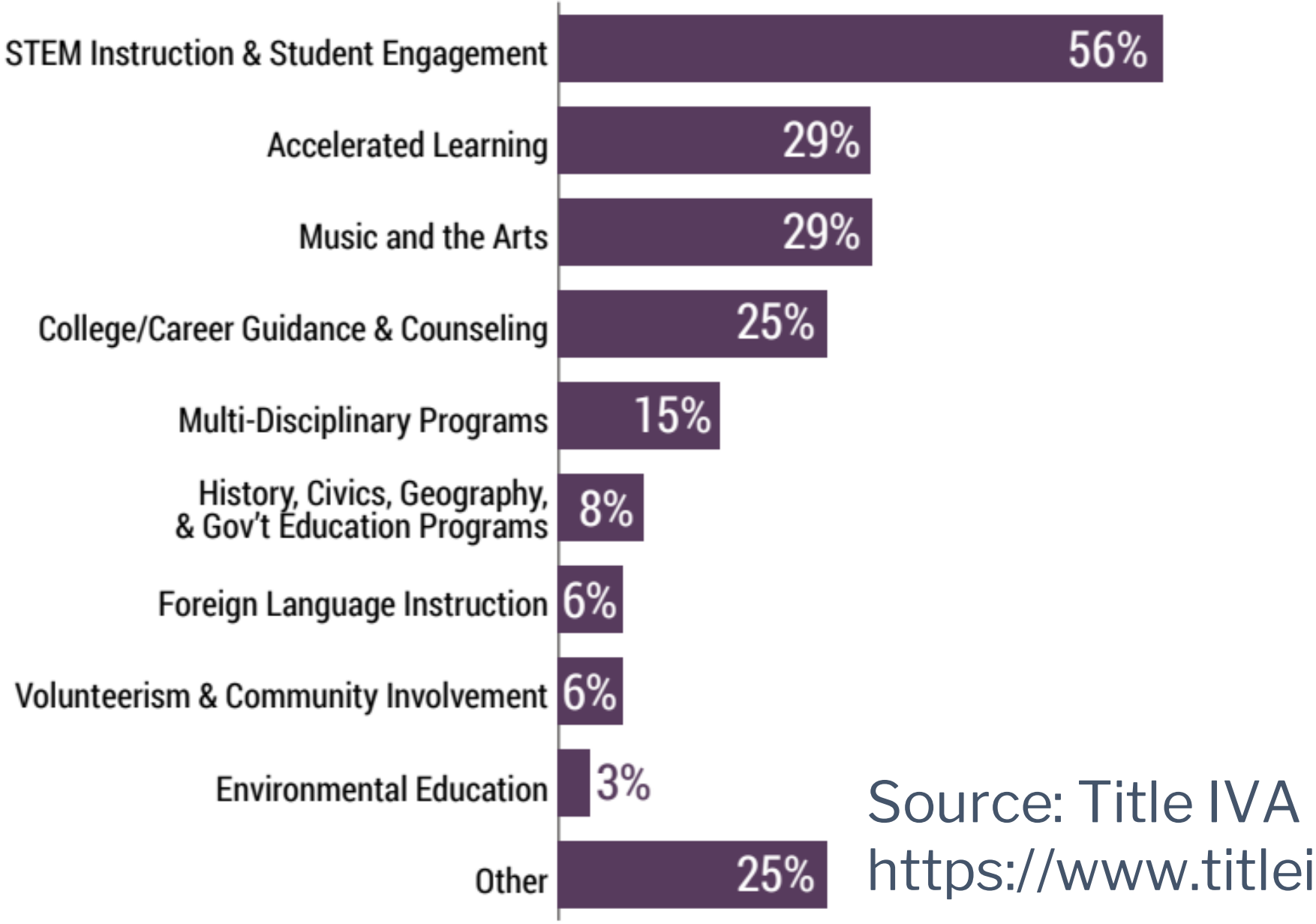
3

Supporting the effective use of technology.

Professional development, blended learning, purchase of devices

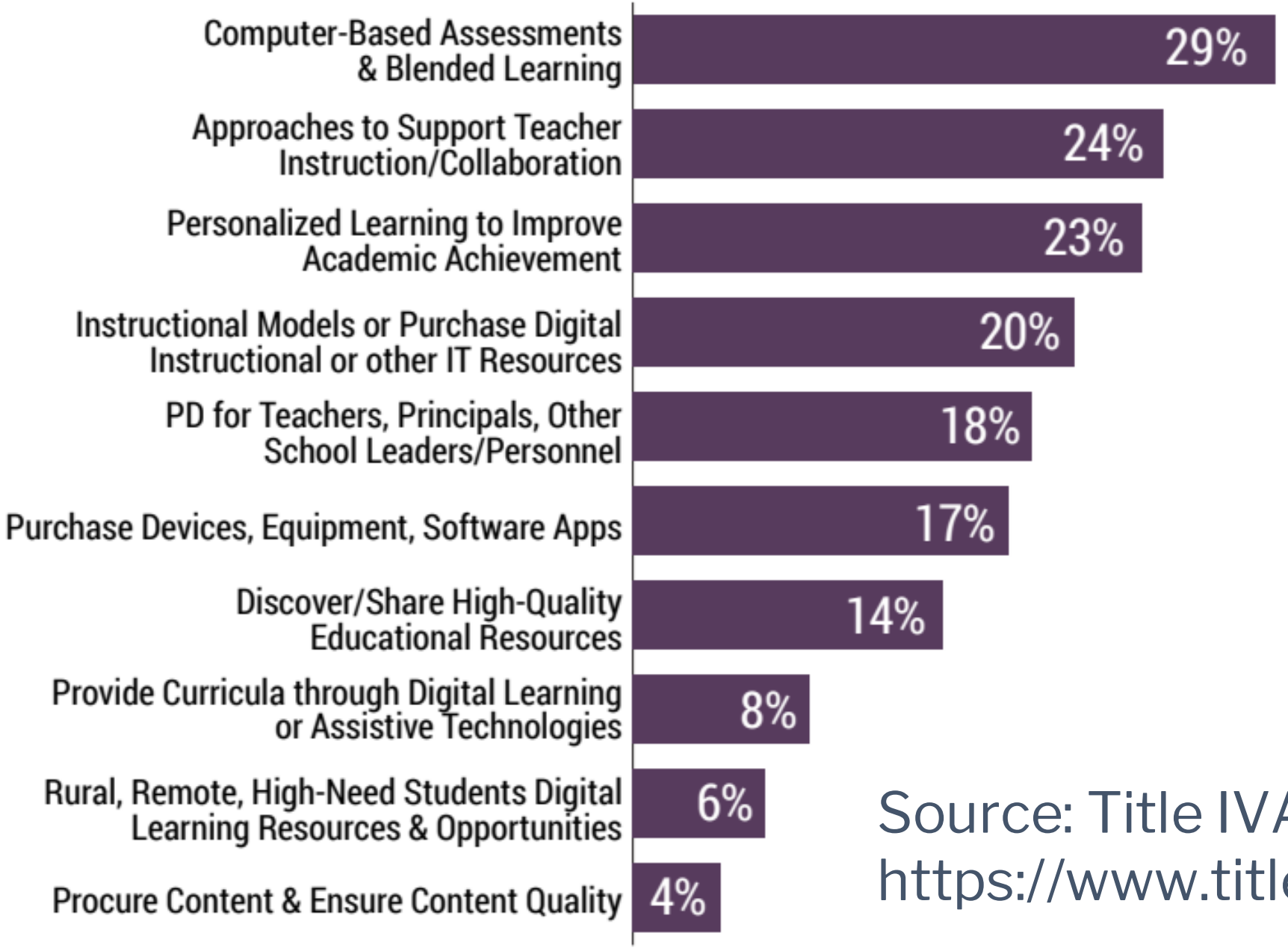
Source: Title IVA Coalition
https://www.titleiva.org/

How did you invest your Title IV-A dollars to increase access to a well-rounded curriculum?



Source: Title IVA Coalition
https://www.titleiva.org/

How did you invest your Title IV-A dollars to support the effective use of technology?



Source: Title IVA Coalition
https://www.titleiva.org/

Title IV-B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers

- Supports community partnerships that support afterschool, before-school, & summer learning, serving under-resourced schools

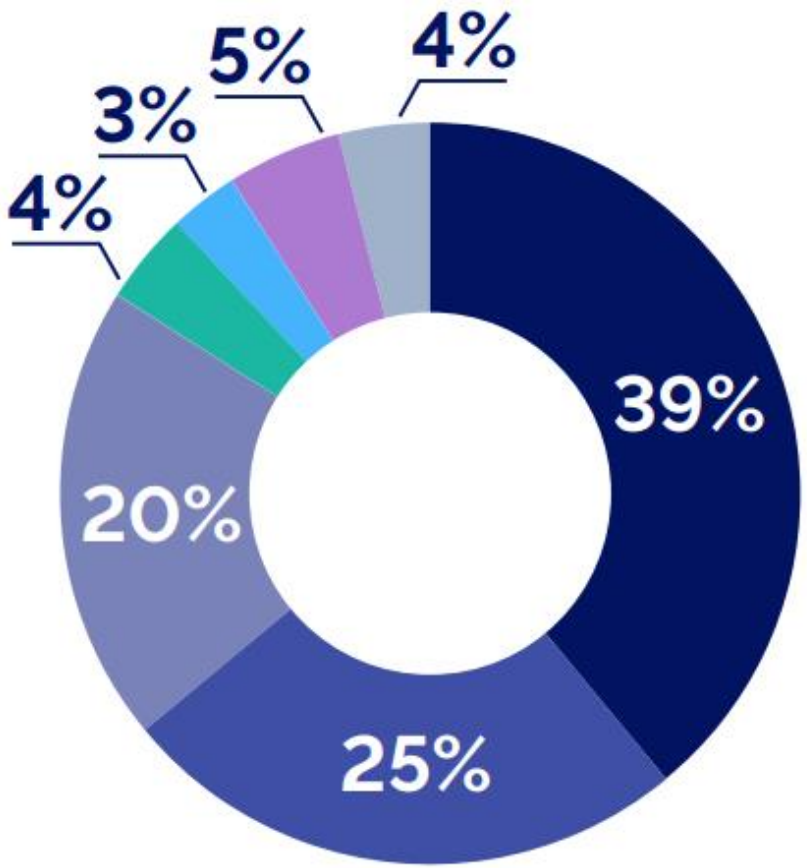
- 3 to 5 year grants

- Flexible funds support various activities:
  - STEM programs
  - youth workforce programs

21st Century Community Learning Centers: The Big Picture



COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS ARE SERVING A DIVERSE GROUP OF STUDENTS…



- Hispanic/Latino
- White
- African American/Black
- Asian American or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islande
- Native American/ Alaskan Native
- Two or more races
- Data not provided

AMONG STUDENTS ATTENDING A COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER:[3]



7 in 10 improved their engagement in learning



2 in 5 who had a GPA below 3.0 the previous year improved their GPA



Approximately 2 in 5 demonstrated growth on their state assessments in reading/language arts or math



Nearly 3 in 5 who were chronically absent the previous school year improved their school-day attendance

THE TOP 5 ACTIVITIES IN COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS



ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

Total hours: **2.6 Million**



HEALTHY AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLE ACTIVITIES

Total hours: **1.98 Million**



STEM LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Total hours: **1.5 Million**



WELL-ROUNDED EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

(including credit recovery or attainment)

Total hours: **1.5 Million**



LITERACY ACTIVITIES

Total hours: **906,000**

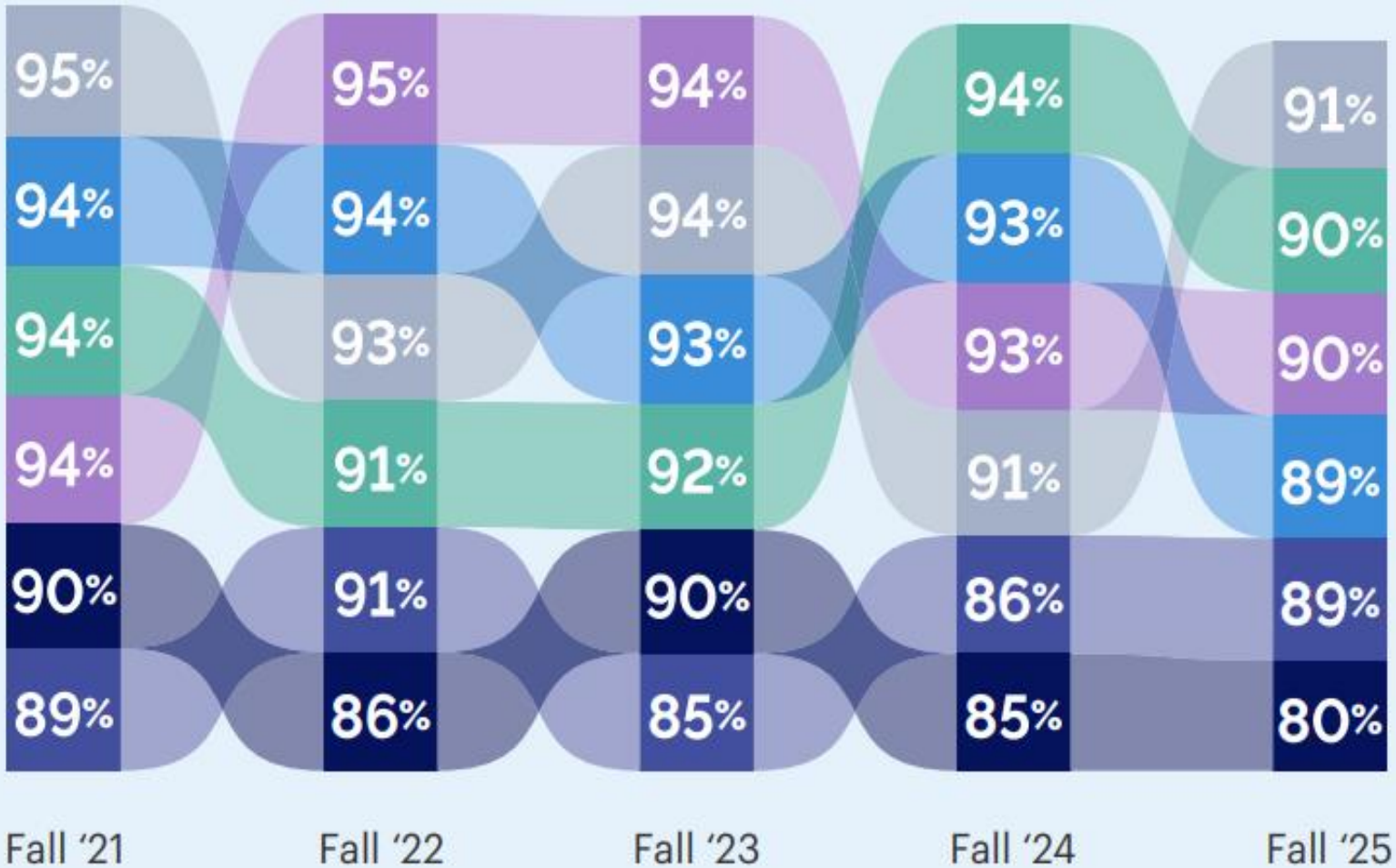
90%

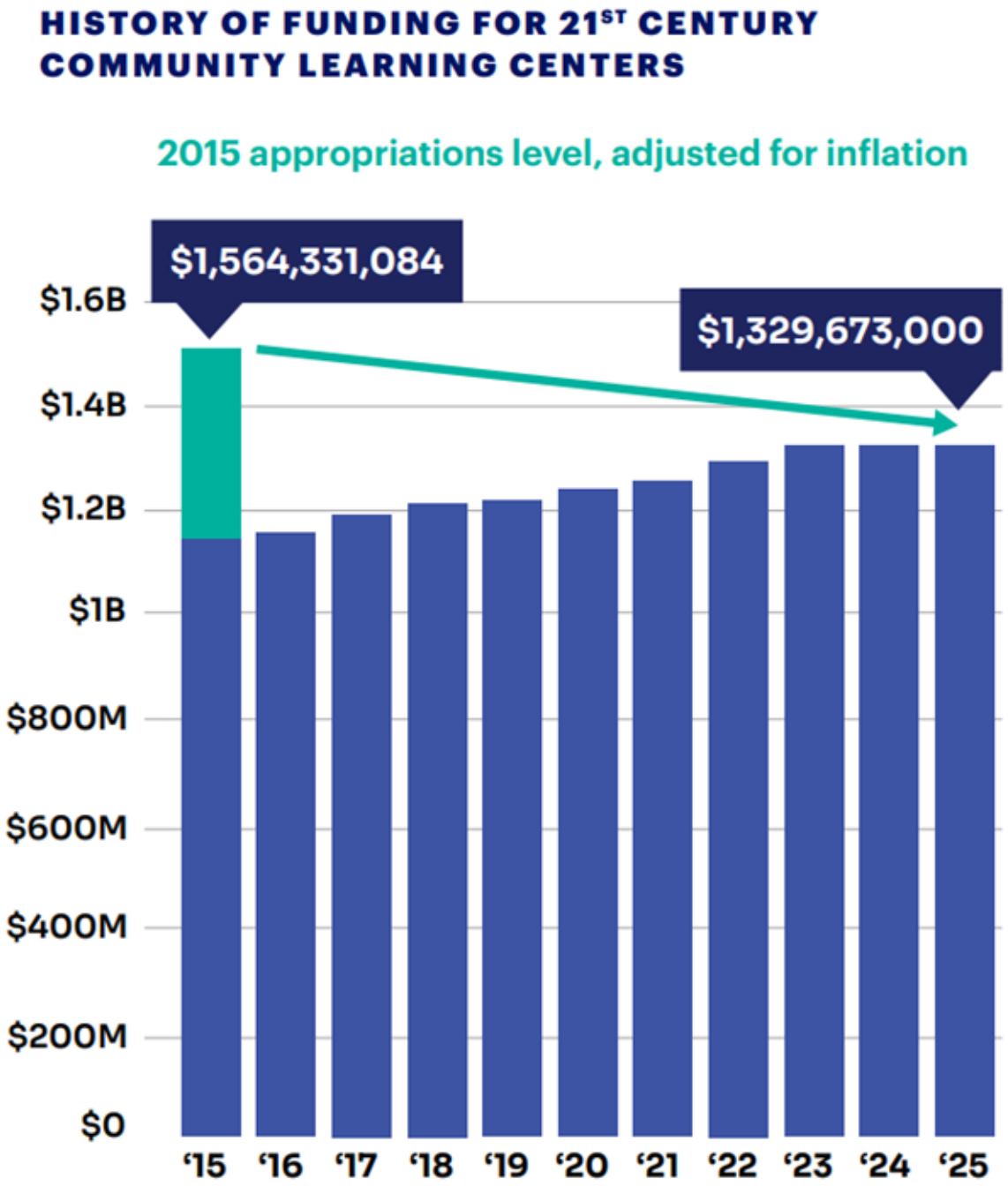
of 21st CCLCs offer STEM learning

https://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/21st-CCLC-Overview-2026.pdf

HELPING STUDENTS CATCH UP ACADEMICALLY AND SOCIALLY[3]

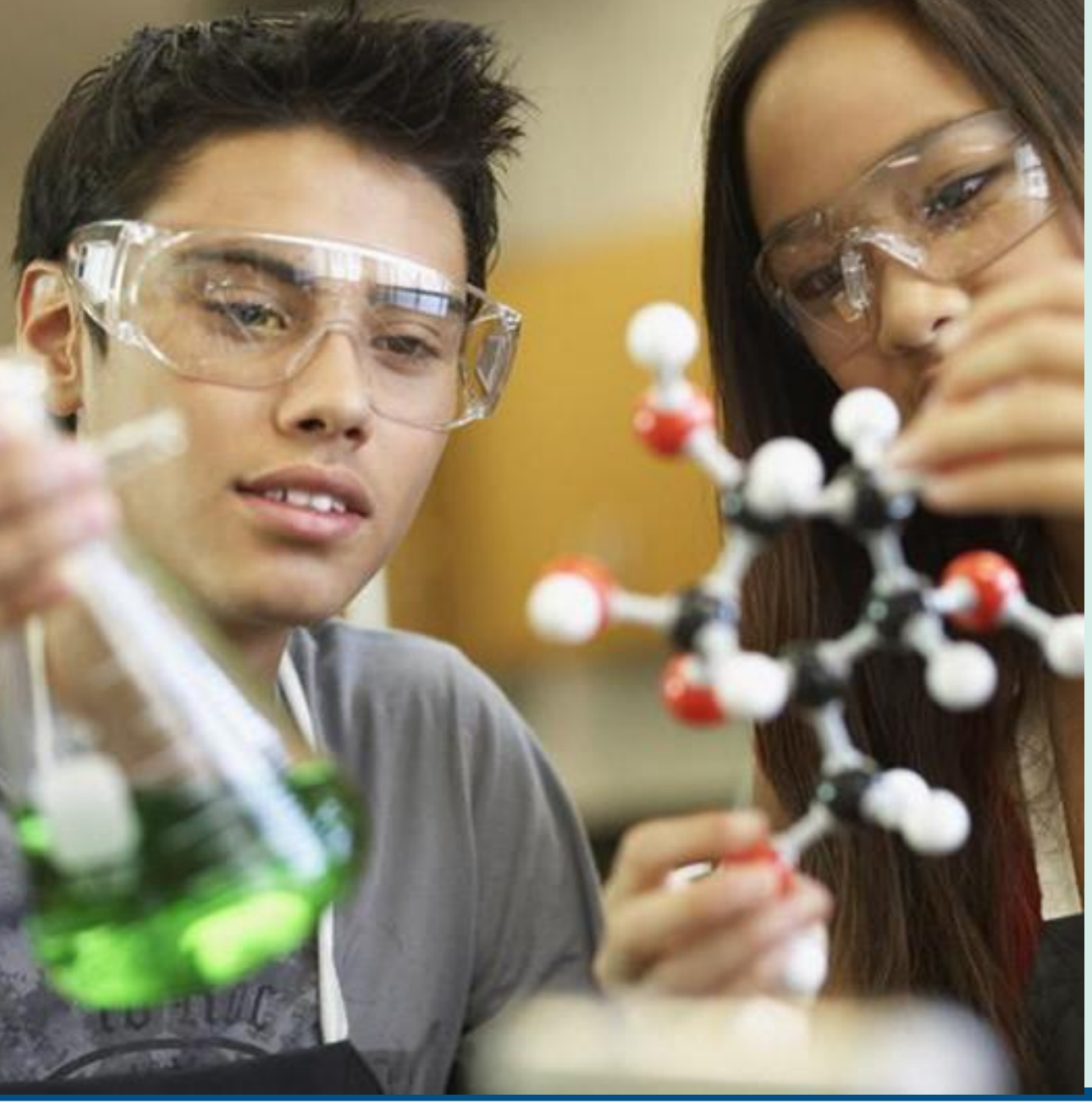
Community Learning Centers are providing students critical supports—from accelerating their academic growth to developing skills they will need in school and out.





Only **1 in 3 requests** for funding 21st CCLC programs awarded.

More than 3 in 4 students whose parents want them to be in a program are missing out.



The Landscape: Threats

The Current Policy Landscape

The President's Proposed FY27 Budget:

- Consolidates 18 grant programs into one block grant
  - Zeroes out 21st CCLC program (Title IVB)
  - Zeroes out Student Support & Academic Enrichment program (Title IVA)

- Cuts STEM education initiatives across the science agencies
  - NSF – over 50% funding cut to the Directorate for STEM Education
  - NASA Office of STEM Engagement zeroed out

The Current Policy Landscape

The House of Representatives' Proposed FY27 Budget:

- Preserves Title IVB & Title IVA
  - 21st CCLC program level at $1.329 billion
  - Student Support & Academic Enrichment program increased by $5 million

- Cuts STEM education initiatives across the science agencies
  - NSF - no funding specified for Directorate for STEM Education
  - NASA Office of STEM Engagement zeroed out

- Report language supportive of afterschool STEM in education funding bill

After School STEM.— The Committee appreciates the benefits of educators trained in emerging technologies and the impact that informal STEM learning environments, such as afterschool and summer STEM programs, play in strengthening student engagement, improving academic outcomes, and expanding pathways into high-demand STEM fields, such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, cybersecurity, robotics, advanced manufacturing, and quantum mechanics.

The Committee encourages the Department to support evidence-based STEM educator development initiatives that strengthen instructional quality in out-of-school settings, including initiatives that promote partnerships among schools, community organizations, and local STEM-focused industry leaders.

The Committee urges the Department to prioritize underserved, rural, and low income communities, where access to robust STEM learning opportunities remain the most limited.



The Landscape: Opportunities

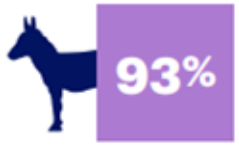
Voters value what afterschool STEM offers

Afterschool is a smart investment in our children's future

EVERY $1 INVESTED IN AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS SAVES $3 BY[15]

- Increasing kids' earning potential
- Improving kids' performance at school
- Reducing crime and welfare costs

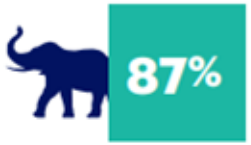
SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC INVESTMENTS IS STRONG AND BIPARTISAN[1]



Democrats



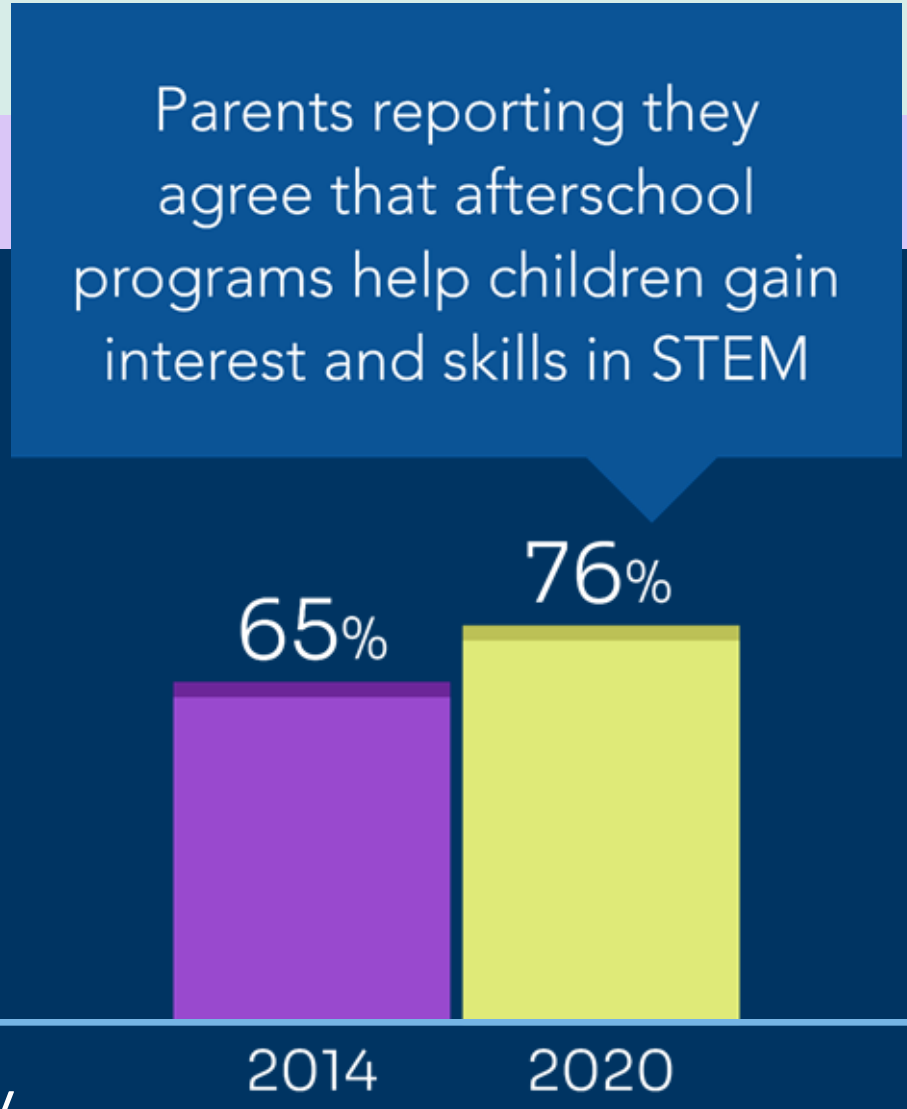
Independents



Republicans

Parents increasingly see afterschool as important for STEM learning

3 out of 4 parents say that afterschool programs help children gain interest and skills related to STEM.



America After 3PM National Survey

What We Can Do

Goals:

- Seek support/connect with Congress
    - Afterschool Works for America - **https://afterschoolworksforamerica.org/**
- Educate and engage leaders, build long-term relationships with elected officials

Strategies:

- Lean in on STEM workforce pathways & administration's priorities
- Share stories of impact, data on outcomes
    - Outreach and testimonials from parents, youth, allies, community partners
- Invite your elected officials out to visit

STEM Education Advocacy in DC

- Topics that Resonate
  - Workforce awareness, career exploration
  - Hands-on experience, “durable” skills

- Background/Investigative Research

- Tell your story
  - What do your experiences mean to you?
  - Paint connections between experiences & your interests, goals

- Keep it simple! Stick to what you know.

Site Visit Tools & Advice

- **3to6.co/SiteVisit**
  - Timelines, Invites, Sample Schedule, Do's & Don'ts
  - Steps to take before, during, and after the visit
- **Lights On Afterschool - Oct 22, 2026**
  - 1 million Americans at 8,000 events nationwide
  - Shine a light on the impact of your program, educate your community, and inspire new advocates
  - https://afterschoolalliance.org/loa.cfm









STEM Advocacy Toolkit

PREPARE

- Afterschool STEM Talking Points
- Messaging Tips

ENGAGE

- Graphics, Videos, & Visuals
- Social Media Tools

MOBILIZE

- Presentations
- Communication Tools for Various Audiences

ENGAGING & SUPPORTING STEM ADVOCATES

https://www.afterschoolstemhub.org/toolkit/

Language Tips

Try these terms...	*Which have a broader appeal than...*
Helping young people reach their full potential	Preparing young people for future success
Highlight social and academic benefits	Focusing only on academic benefits
Gain foundational skills like teamwork, communications, problem solving skills	Omitting specific skills
Well-being or mental well-being	Social and emotional learning
Urban, rural, and suburban	In every zip code
Students who need the most help get it	Equitable
Funding	Resources

AFTERSCHOOL STEM HUB

Say This, Not That

Many of the common arguments that STEM education advocates use don't help advance people's thinking about STEM learning and why it matters.

Strategic communicators make intentional choices about what to emphasize, and what to leave unsaid. While the following recommendations might seem counterintuitive, the research supports them!

USED TO THIS?	TRY THIS INSTEAD!	WHY?
STEM	Science, technology, engineering, and math—the subjects collectively known as STEM.	STEM is a meaningless acronym to most—let people know what subjects make up STEM skills and learning.
Out-of-school time	Programs that meet after school, on the weekends, or during the summer	Disrupt the assumption that kids can only learn "real" skills during traditional school hours and provide rich examples to expand conceptions.
To remain competitive in a global economy...	To build our shared prosperity...	Global competition cues up unproductive narratives about America's best days being in the past. Point people towards the future and frame STEM learning as a shared good and societal responsibility.

Additional Opportunities

- **CYESS Youth Consultants**
  Learn more:
  https://cyess.org/projects/

- **Lights on Afterschool!**
  Learn more:
  https://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loa.cfm



Afterschool STEM Hub

LinkedIn

THANK YOU!



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